

AGENDA ITEM VI D

PROGRESS REPORT ON CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PROGRAM

LOUISIANA TECHNICAL COLLEGE -ASCENSION CAMPUS

ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE IN PROCESS TECHNOLOGY

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At its meeting of September 24, 2003, the Board of Regents took the following action:

Conditional approval is granted for the proposed A.A.S. program in Process Control Technology (CIP Code 15.0699) at Louisiana Technical College-Ascension, effective immediately. By August 1, 2004, the College shall submit to the Commissioner of Higher Education a report addressing weaknesses and problematic areas identified in the staff summary and analysis.

STAFF SUMMARY

The A.A.S. in Process Technology was implemented in Fall 2003. A report on the program was received from the LTC-Ascension on September 28, 2004. Additional information requested by the staff was received on October 11, 2004.

1. Need

The Louisiana Chemical Association(LCA) continues to survey their member companies. The LCA indicates total immediate need for 269 process technicians statewide. In particular, the Ascension, Baton Rouge and Iberville area requires 64-93 process technicians. In addition, the LCA has also included information from oil and gas companies which shows 375 process technicians are currently needed. LCA reports that when data from other areas and companies are reported, the statewide need for process technicians is about 1,000. With the estimated number of graduates for this year at 139, the gap between demand and graduates appears to be growing. The State P-Tech Advisory Board, Workforce Development Commission and Gulf Coast Process Technology Alliance continue to express an ongoing need for P-Tech graduates.

2. Students

The institution provided the following numbers or projections of students and graduates:

Students	Fall 2003	Spring 2004	Sum 2004	Fall 2004	Spring 2005	Sum 2005
New	28	0	0	7	5	0
Continuing		26	5	10	17	15
Graduates	0	0	2	0	0	6

The enrollment of twenty six in Spring 2004 included some high school students. One of the objectives of the first course is for students to determine if process technology is a field that they would like to pursue. The instructors and advisory committee are recruiting students into the program.

The LTC Ascension, in conjunction with four companies providing assistance, is working with the parish school system and has begun offering P-Tech 101 during the standard school day at Dutchtown High School. Currently, twenty three students are enrolled in the course because of their interest. By Fall 2005, the program plans to offer the course at other area high schools, such as East Ascension and St. Amant High Schools. It is hoped that this exposure will attract more students into Process Technology.

For the first year of operation of the program, two internships were established at each of two companies. For the current year, agreements have been established with four additional companies, which increases the number of students who can be placed in internships to approximately twelve.

One recent graduate of the Process Technology program was accepted into the B.S. program in Petroleum Services at Nicholls State University with twenty one hours of transfer credits. He declined a job offer, hoping to obtain employment offshore so that he can continue at Nicholls while working. The other graduate obtained employment.

3. Faculty

Two well-qualified adjunct faculty are teaching the P-Tech courses. The institution is working with the P-Tech Advisory Committee, which meets every two months, to determine when a full-time faculty will be needed.

4. Facilities/Equipment/Resources

Additional reference materials pertinent to Process Technology have been acquired by the institution; other video and process simulation materials are being evaluated for consideration of acquisition. LTC Ascension reports that students have access to the libraries at River Parishes Community College, LSU, as well as the Ascension Parish library. The internet is also available to students in the lab and classrooms.

Current glass labs (essential components for Process Technology training) have been evaluated by professional safety personnel provided by two local companies and found appropriate for student safety. The institution was recently notified that monies are available for three additional glass labs are needed. The engineering firm that was awarded the contract for the existing lab has been given the necessary information to complete the project. A former classroom has been made available at the

LTC Ascension for three glass labs; a temporary building has been obtained to house the classroom.

Upon completion of the three additional glass labs, an E-module will still be needed for the distillation unit. LTC Ascension is working with the Incumbent Worker Training Program of the Louisiana Department of Labor (IWTP) and its industry partners to secure funds for a Pilot Plan for the E-module, which will be outside the building, under cover. LTC Ascension has indicated that another building would be useful.

5. Funding

Funds have been made available to the program for faculty salaries, reference books and supplies for the program. Equipment funds that have been made available for the fiscal year will be used to purchase a Distillation Trainer and other equipment as the budget allows.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The A.A.S. program in Process Technology at LTC Ascension is developing slowly. Current enrollment is inflated with an undetermined number of high-school students who are taking introductory courses to investigate possible program interest. It is also unclear how many students are simply taking select courses for job-training purposes with no intention of finishing the complete curriculum. While the program is relatively new, numbers of graduates anticipated for this year should be greater. There appears to be some disconnect between numbers of enrollees and stated need of industry for large numbers of graduates. Needed resources at this point appear to be keeping pace with student interest. If this program eventually evidences a stable, sizeable student enrollment, then full-time faculty will be required.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee receive the AY 2004-2005 report relative to the implementation of the A.A.S. in Process Technology at the Louisiana Technical College-Ascension. By September 1, 2005, the institution shall submit a progress report to the Commissioner of Higher Education addressing concerns cited in the staff summary. In particular, this report should contain significant evidence of substantial and sustained student interest in the program.